

Indiana Department of Environmental Management

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(Text does not include verbatim comments)

Thank you, it's great to be with you.

The Indiana Economic Development Academy invited me to speak before the 21st Annual Indiana Economic Development Course a year ago. But some events have a way of "carrying the day" and an event last year – the White River contamination – carried me away from here. I want to thank the sponsors of this symposium for understanding my circumstances last year and for giving me another chance this year!

I am happy to report that the White River is doing very well and that considerable progress has been made on the 50-mile stretch between Anderson, which is just downstream from here, and Indianapolis. And in one sense, the White River's contribution to the quality of life for Central Indiana residents is the keystone of my remarks today: Protecting our environment is an essential cornerstone of economic development.

So, 2001 is a new year and it is a privilege for me to spend time with you. I am here to speak with you about the Indiana Department of Environmental Management and the role we play in protecting our state's environment

For today's discussion, I want to focus on the role IDEM plays in economic development and how we help new businesses get started and existing ones expand. I will be speaking about several different areas of our agency, including regulatory issues, technical assistance, and outreach programs that can help you, as economic developers, with environmental questions.

Economic growth is the foundation of Indiana's communities. Business and industry create jobs from which Hoosiers earn a living for their families; they build our economy, strengthen our families, and provide the tax base for our communities. As industry and business continue to look to locate or expand in Indiana, it is imperative that we accommodate this growth without compromising our environment. We – economic developers and IDEM – must agree on a common goal: To achieve economic prosperity and growth while ensuring environmental prosperity for ourselves and our families, our children and our children's children. It's not an either or proposition; we must work together

Let me take a few moments to give you some background about IDEM. Compared to other state agencies, we are the "new kid on the block," having been established in 1986. We oversee and enforce federal and state regulations regarding the environment.

IDEM employs just under 1000 people who work in various areas within our four major offices: the Office of Air Quality, the Office of Water Quality, the Office of Land Quality, and the Office of Pollution Prevention and Technical Assistance. IDEM is responsible for issuing environmental permits to industry, business, and municipalities, and for enforcing the regulations set forth by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the state of Indiana. It's a big job. We also provide educational and technical assistance to businesses and communities through numerous outreach programs.

In other words, IDEM helps businesses do business in Indiana and to operate in an environmentally responsible manner.

So how does IDEM help business, you ask? Aren't we the same agency that requires you to bend over backward to implement environmentally sound practices ? Well, yes, we are a regulatory agency first and foremost. This is our primary responsibility to more than 6 million Hoosiers. We make sure that every new or expanding business remains at or below health-based and environmental-based standards to protect our residents and our environment. And backing us up are laws, regulations and rules that IDEM uses to ensure its mission of making Indiana a cleaner, healthier place to live.

But we also understand that Indiana's economic prosperity depends on economic growth. So we have designed many ways to make it easier and more efficient for business to work with IDEM to ensure that economic growth and environmental protection grow hand-in-hand. I also firmly believe that the overwhelming majority of Hoosier businesses want to comply with environmental standards. They realize that it's in their best interest, as well as the interest of their employees, their employees' families and the residents of the community in which they are located, to be good stewards of the environment .

Whether you are a full-fledged economic developer or a fledgling developer, your primary dealings with IDEM will be during the environmental permitting process. As I said earlier, IDEM is responsible for issuing environmental permits, which spell out a business' environmental responsibilities, including compliance and policy issues. A new business or a business expansion project cannot begin to build or operate its facility until it receives a permit from IDEM and frankly the permit process can be complicated and lengthy. However, once IDEM receives a permit application, we are efficient in turning it around. With a measure of pride, I can tell you that we have not issued a late permit in 25 months and during this amount of time, we have issued more than 6,000 permits.

To help you identify what permits, approvals or requirements may apply to your prospective business client, IDEM has developed an electronic Permit Guide . The Guide is written in plain English and can be a great help to you in navigating through the permit process and identifying pertinent permits related to your client's project. The guide also includes the name of a contact person within IDEM for more information about environmental regulatory requirements. It also links to other regulatory agencies, such as DNR, EPA, and Corps of Engineers. You can find the permit guide on our Web site. Hard copies also available.

Our agency also offers technical assistance to new and existing business. A strong partnership between IDEM and industry is instrumental in reducing the amount of pollution that is created through the course of doing business. Historically, businesses that implement pollution prevention measures save money, increase production through more efficient processes and decrease regulatory burden. All of these factors contribute to a more sustainable and profitable business.

Governor's Toxic Reduction Challenge In 1998, Governor O'Bannon challenged Indiana businesses to pledge to take voluntary steps to reduce their toxic discharges above and beyond regulatory requirements and to assist other businesses in doing the same. So far, 83 companies have accepted the challenge and our toxic release levels are decreasing, though there is much left to do. This past year's Pollution Prevention Award winners have alone reduced emissions by 2M tons through voluntary efforts

IDEM's Office of Pollution Prevention and Technical Assistance or OPPTA is a great branch of the agency. It is an exception to the regulatory aspect of IDEM – provides confidential services and assistance. It exists to help you to know what Indiana expects environmentally of the business you're representing and to teach you and your client how to become environmentally responsible. OPPTA's staff includes a variety of professionals who are familiar with what business can do to become environmentally responsible and friendly in Indiana.

For example, the staff is an integral part of the design and implementation of the ISO 14001 Program for Indiana facilities. ISO 14001 stands for International Organization for Standardization, a relatively new international standard that specifies one way of developing an environmental management system.

OPPTA administers a grant program that works with Indiana to assess the environmental benefits of ISO 14001, the results of which have shown benefits to the environment and business. Industry giants such as Ford, Honda and Chrysler have implemented this program and require their suppliers to be ISO 14001 certified, too.

OPPTA also facilitates recycling and reuse of industrial and commercial wastes through the Indiana Materials Exchange. This program allows businesses to access alternative waste management solutions for their industrial and commercial waste. Often, a business can utilize or incorporate another business' waste into its manufacturing process. This reuse of waste material helps to preserve landfill space and most often leads to businesses saving money and making a positive environmental contribution to their community. We also recognize those businesses which make great strides in recycling efforts through the Governor's Awards for Excellence in Recycling – nominations now being accepted through January 31.

OPPTA is a great tool for you to use as you look for ways to bring business to Indiana in a way that benefits the business, Hoosiers and Indiana's environment.

Business continues to find Indiana an attractive place to locate a new facility or expand an existing facility. Recently, companies such as Toyota in Gibson County and Eli Lilly in Marion County chose our state to expand their operations. This is due, in part, to the hard work of

professionals in your field of expertise as well as in state and local governmental agencies. Indiana's state agencies work together to ensure that businesses know that they are welcome in our communities. An example of this kind of relationship, which I referenced earlier, is between IDEM and the Indiana Department of Commerce, led by Tom McKenna, who you will hear from shortly. IDEM and DOC work together to provide the necessary tools to make businesses successful in Indiana while protecting the environment. As an aside, let me say how thankful that I am preceding Tom, rather than following him!

And not to steal his thunder, which I frankly am not sure is possible, let me mention that the Department of Commerce's Energy Policy Division offers various tools to promote the use of environmentally sound practices, including grants and loans for recycling initiatives, promotion of energy conservation measures and reduction of industrial waste.

IDEM also works closely with the Indiana Development Finance Authority or IDFA to break down financial barriers that aid in transforming brownfields into productive reuse sites, stopping urban industrial blight and putting these sites back on the tax rolls. A brownfield is an abandoned or under- utilized industrial or commercial property on which possible environmental contamination stymies potential reuse.

Most often, the overarching issue blocking brownfield redevelopment is the cost of assessment and for cleaning up the contamination. In 1997, IDFA became the administrator of Indiana's Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund. This fund makes low interest loans and grants available to cities, towns and counties to assess and clean up brownfields in their jurisdictions.

Complementing this program is IDEM's Brownfields Program. It provides assistance in many different forms. The Brownfields Program works with local governments to identify environmental issues that they may encounter when they embark upon the redevelopment of a brownfield site. IDEM performs environmental assessments, which are free to local units of government. An "environmental assessment" seeks to answer many of the questions in regard to environmental liabilities found on a brownfield and potential clean-up costs. IDEM and IDFA also work together on the Interagency Brownfields Task Force. The task force brings together representatives from several agencies, such as DNR, INDOT, ISDH, and the federal agencies of HUD and the highway administration, to share and marshal resources available for brownfield redevelopment.

It is to all of our benefits to redevelop, recycle and reuse land that has already served such a purpose, rather than forever expanding outward and leaving formerly utilized land to become an urban blight.

Thank you for giving me another opportunity to speak with you. I'm glad that I could make it. I hope the information I have provided today gives you a good introduction to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management and the tools we offer to ensure the economic, as well as environmental, future of Indiana.

Thank you again and have a great day.

